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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, You offer every generation an opportunity of repentance and by Your Spirit You stir within the hearts of Your people holy desires to reconcile differences, to forgive injuries and establish Your kingdom of peace and justice on this Earth.

Refresh all in this Nation whose spirits are parched from a lack of prayer. Nourish all those who hunger to hear Your Word and accomplish Your will.

Be with the Members of the House of Representatives this day. May everything they do begin with Your holy inspiration, continue with Your help and come to fulfillment under Your guidance. For You alone are Lord, forever and ever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GREEN of Texas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 357. Concurrent Resolution permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Dr. Dorothy Height.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 92. Concurrent resolution congratulating and saluting Focus: HOPE on the occasion of its 35th anniversary and for its remarkable commitment and contributions to Detroit, the State of Michigan, and the United States.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 106-398, as amended by Public Law 108-7, in accordance with the qualifications specified under section 1238(b)(3)(E) of Public Law 106-398, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, in consultation with the chairmen of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Senate Committee on Finance, appoints the following individual to the United States-China Economic Security Review Commission:

Gary J. Schmitt of Washington, D.C., vice Michael A. Ledeen of Maryland.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 108-173, the Chair, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, appoints the following individual to serve as a member of the Commission on Systemic Interoperability:

Herbert Pardes, M.D., of New York.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain 10 one-minutes per side.

TIME FOR MEDICAL MALPRACTICE REFORM

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, Americans pay a lot for health care, and there are a lot of reasons for the high costs. One of them is excessive awards in medical malpractice cases. In Pennsylvania alone there are \$1.2 billion in payouts for medical malpractice cases a year. That is \$1,000 for every man, woman and child in our Commonwealth.

People who are mistreated by medical professionals should receive the money they need to compensate for their injuries, but in my State, 40 percent of these awards go to trial attorneys. The result is out-of-control insurance premiums on doctors and higher costs for consumers.

A recent survey this year said that 70 percent of Pennsylvania's doctors have considered closing their practice because of the cost of medical malpractice insurance. Many have left, and many of the new doctors are going elsewhere. Of those that purchase coverage, the costs are going up exponentially every year, as much as 50 percent a year. The same survey reported that frivolous lawsuits are preventing them from getting specialized care for their patients. This is a big problem, and one that Congress should address.

The House has acted with common-sense reform. Now the other body should get past political games and pass reform of the medical liability lawsuit system in this country. Our doctors need it. More importantly, the American people need it. We need to pass lawsuit abuse reform.

PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY FOR WORKING AMERICANS

(Mr. GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep disappointment in Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan's remarks about Social

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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